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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 05237 101027Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAA-01 SSM-03 IO-13 ACDA-12
SES-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 /097 W
----------075055 101029Z /10
O P 100942Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9601
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5237

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: SEPTEMBER 10, 1978, 12:00 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 5231 (DTG 091019Z SEP 78)

1. MORE FIGHTING IN BEIRUT AREA:

A. ALL SEMBLANCE OF THE AUGUST 9 CEASE-FIRE APPEARS TO HAVE
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FALLEN APART AS OF THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 9-10. ASHRAFIYAH
AND THE PORT AREA WERE SHELLED, IN ADDITION TO THE USUAL AREAS
OF AYN AR-RUMMANAH AND HADATH IN THE SUBURBS. THE FIGHTING BEGAN
WITH SNIPING AROUND 1600 HOURS SEPTEMBER 9. SHELLING STARTED AT
2000 HOURS AND ENDED ABOUT 0200 HOURS SEPTEMBER 10. BOTH SIDES
USED ARTILLERY, ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE SOURCE.

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B. SOME MORTAR ROUNDS HIT THE CORNICHE MAZRAA AREA OF WEST BIEUT, WHERE MANY PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE LEFTISTS HAVE THEIR OFFICES, FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT DAY. NEVERTHELESS, THE FIGHTING HAS BEEN BETWEEN SYRIAN SOLDIERS AND CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN, WITH NO SIGNIFICANT PARTICIPATION OF PALESTINIANS OR LEBANESE MUSLIMS.

C. AS OF 1200 HOURS SEPTEMBER 10, THE CITY IS GENERALLY QUIET, ALTHOUGH OCCASIONAL EXPLOSIONS AND INTERMITTENT SMALL ARMS FIRE CAN BE HEARD. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, FIVE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED AND 98 WOUNDED SINCE SEPTEMBER 7.

D. AS USUAL EACH SIDE HAS ACCUSED THE OTHER OF STARTING THE FIGHTING. WE DO NOT KNOW WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE. THE LATEST FIGHTING FITS A FAMILIAR PATTERN, HOWEVER. THERE IS A CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT. IT IS OBEYED FOR A FEW DAYS. MINOR INFACTIONS THEN FOLLOW, AND WITHIN A FEW WEEKS THEY BUILD INTO ANOTHER FULL SCALE ROUND OF FIGHTING. AFTER WHICH THERE IS A CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT...

2. HOSS SAYS ADF TO STAY:

MEANWHILE, PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS TOLD REPORTERS SEPTEMBER 9 THAT THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCE (ADF) WOULD REMAIN IN LEBANON "UNTIL THE LEBANESE ARMY IS REBUILT, BUT NOT ONE HOUR MORE." COMMENT: THE MANDATE OF THE SYRIAN DOMINATED ADF EXPIRES ON OCTOBER 27. MANY MARONITES OPPOSE RENEWAL OF THE MANDATE, WHILE
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MUSLIMS GENERALLY FAVOR IT. END COMMENT.

3. AMERICAN SHIP FLEES PORT:

AS SHELLS BEGAN FALLING NEAR THE PORT AT ABOUT MIDNIGHT SEPTEMBER 9, THE CAPTAIN OF AN AMERICAN SHIP STILL UNLOADING PL 480 GRAIN AT A BERTH SOUGHT OUR ADVICE AS TO WHETHER HE SHOULD MOVE HIS SHIP OUT TEMPORARILY. ON THE BASIS OF A QUICK CONSENSUS OF THE OFFICERS PRESENT IN THE EMBASSY AT THE TIME, WE INFORMALLY ADVISED HIM TO DO SO, AND HE THEREUPON SUCCEEDED IN GETTING THE SHIP OUT. THE SHIP IS NOW ANCHORED SAFELY ABOUT 4 MILES OFF THE COAST. THE PORT IS AGAIN CLOSED.
PARKER

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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